

I Claim:

1. A process for printing mixed color and black and white print jobs comprising the steps of:
entering a print job in machine readable form;
processing the print job to identify the pages within the job containing color;
creating and storing a first digital file of the pages containing color;
creating and storing a second digital file of the pages that are only black and white;
creating and storing additional digital file containing the feature of the print job including the location of the color pages;
printing the color pages stored in the first digital file on a color printer;
setting up a digital printer so it can access the printed color pages; and
running the print job on the digital printer including merging the color pages into the black and white pages to result in a merged document.
2. The process of claim 1, wherein the operator is able to manually force color or black and white printing on a given page of the print job.
3. The process of claim 1 wherein the identification of the pages within the print job that contain color is performed by analyzing the pixels to determine whether the percentage of cyan, magenta and yellow pixels exceed a threshold level, wherein pages that exceed the threshold level are identified as containing color and those that do not are forced to black and white.
4. The process of claim 3 wherein the threshold level is set at 2% of either cyan, magenta or yellow pixels and 1% of the combination of all three.
5. The process of claim 1 wherein the step of setting up a digital printer so it can access the printed color pages comprises placing the printed color pages in an input tray of the digital printer.
6. The process of claim 1 wherein the pages in first digital file and second digital file are stored in rasterized form.
7. The process of claim 1 wherein the processing, creating and storing steps are performed by a raster imaging processor.

8. The process of claim 1 further comprising the step of printing an operator instruction sheet.
9. The process of claim 8 wherein the operator instruction sheet is printed before the color pages are printed.
10. A process for printing mixed color and black and white print jobs comprising the steps of:
entering a print job in machine readable form, said print job including pages with color and pages only in black and white;
printing the pages with color on a color printer;
setting up a digital printer so it can access the printed color pages; and
running the print job on the digital printer including merging the color page into the black and white pages to result in a merged document.
11. The process of claim 10 wherein the step of setting up a digital printer so it can access the printed color pages comprises placing the printed color pages in an input tray of the digital printer.
12. The process of claim 10 wherein the print job is entered into a raster imaging processor said the raster imaging processor identifying the color pages and the black and white pages and managing the printing process.
13. The process of claim 10 further comprising the step of printing an operator instruction sheet.
14. The process of claim 13 wherein the operator instruction sheet is printed before the color pages are printed.
15. A system for printing and automatically merging a print job that includes both color pages and entirely black and white pages, comprising:
a data processor configured to receive a print job in machine readable form and analyze the print job to determine what pages in the print job include color, what pages do not include color and where in the print job those pages are located;
a color printer in communication relationship the data processor to receive the data related to the color pages identified by the data processor and print the color pages; and

a black and white digital printer capable of receiving the printed color pages and further capable of receiving data for the data processor, wherein the digital printer prints the non-color pages and inserts the color pages received from the color printer in their proper location in the print job.

16. The system of claim 15 wherein the data processor is a raster imaging processor.
17. The system of claim 15 wherein the digital printer is a high speed digital printer.
18. The system of claim 16 wherein the raster imaging processor counts cyan, magenta and yellow pixels in each page of the print job to determine whether there is color on the page, said determination is based on whether the number of pixels exceeds a threshold level.
19. The system of claim 18 wherein the threshold level is set at 2% of either cyan, magenta or yellow pixels and a total of 1% when all three are combined.